and hunger eradication were discussed. Bracketed text on achieving improvements in market access, phasing out of export subsidies and reduction of trade distorting practices in agriculture were considered together with other trade related issues. However, due to their domestic compulsions, developed countries did not agree to lift farm subsidies and thus it did not find place in the agreed texts of Political Declaration and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Law for use of Forest Materials

2398. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Environment and Forests had received proposal during June, 2001 from Orissa Ex-MLAs Council, to make Law for not using the forest materials in buildings, except thatched houses and instead of using iron, aluminium, plastics as alternatives; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken so far, by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry is already aware of the issue of desirability of substitution of wood by other materials for various purposes including construction of buildings and has issued guidelines/instructions to the States/Central Government Organisations for necessary action.

Pine Forests in Central Himalayan region

†2399. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that underground water level of Central Himalayan region is continuously declining, due to expansion of Pine forest there;

(b) whether it is also a fact that during the recent years, the area covered by wide leaf trees has shrunk while the pine forest cover has expanded; and

(c) if so, the steps his Ministry is going to take to promote afforestation

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

of wide leaf trees in the said region, for environmental balance?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir. Faulty land use, developmental activities, geo-morphological changes and loss of vegetal cover are some of the factors responsible for drying up of water sources in hilly regions.

(b) and (c) Pine forests are widely distributed in the sub-tropical zone of outer and middle Himalayas and to some extent in the inner Himalayas upto the elevation of 1800 mts. and their distribution depends upon the edaphic and climatic conditions. Creation of drier conditions due to biotic factors may lead to invasion of pines in the areas of broad-leaved species. Preference is given to the plantation of broad-leaved species according to suitability of the site. Pines are no longer a priority species in the plantation programmes undertaken in the region.

Water Treatment Plant for Puskar Sarovar

†2400. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a scheme to set up a water treatment plant for cleaning the polluted water of the famous pilgrimage place Puskar Sarovar, in Rajasthan is under consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, when this scheme would be implemented, giving the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A scheme of National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) is under implementation for conservation and management of polluted lakes and ponds. The Government of Rajasthan was asked to submit a proposal for restoration of Puskar Sarovar and its inclusion under National Lake Conservation Plan. However, no proposal has been received so far from the State Government.

Simlipal, Satkosia and Sunabeda as Tiger Reserve Forests

2401. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Forests Department, Government of Orissa, has

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.